

EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Defense Attache Office, Islamabad, Pakistan  
Department of State, Pouch Room  
Washington, D.C. 20520

U-035-81

22 January 1981

TO: Lt Col Robert K. Brown, 315-30-9054  
U.S. Army Reserve  
P.O. Box 693  
Boulder, Colorado 80306

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

1. I would like to express appreciation for your outstanding service to the United States of America. Through your efforts, the U.S. Government has gained significant insights and better understands the military capabilities of potential adversaries. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.
2. Your aggressiveness and steadfast determination in the face of considerable obstacles exemplify the characteristics essential for officers and leaders. You can be proud of the contributions you have made.
3. Again, please accept my thanks and appreciation for your efforts.
4. Request a copy of this letter be inserted in your personnel folder to document the significant contributions you have made.

*Harold A. Mauger, Jr.*  
HAROLD A. MAUGER, JR.  
Colonel, U. S. Air Force  
Defense and Air Attache

After turning over the AK-74 rounds to representatives of a certain government agency (not the CIA), we discussed what kind of deals we could make for the future. They gave me a list of Russian equipment they wanted and a list of prices they would pay for each item. A container of nerve gas, for example, would bring \$250,000; a container of incapacitating gas, \$125,000; an AGS-17 grenade launcher, \$65,000, and so on.

Running around Pakistan with pockets full of money did not seem like a good idea, so I asked if they would pay me, in cash or gold, for each item as I turned it in. This way, I could pay for something from the list with money received from a previous sale, leaving me with little to carry around. Still, I anticipated the Afghans would demand sizable sums of money for any items purchased from them.

They agreed, then instructed me to check in with the Defense Attaché's Office (DAO) in the American Embassy to let them know I had arrived. They instructed me to have no dealings with the State Department, as State had tried to take credit for obtaining the NBC filter that Galen Geer had brought out of Afghanistan. No problem, or so I thought at the time. Checking in at DAO, a young nincompoop lieutenant colonel began huffing, "I'll have to contact the DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency) first. And to hell with you, too. 'Whatever,'" I replied. It was time to head back to the local Holiday Inn.

Lieutenant Colonel Nincompoop showed up the next morning to officially tell me, in an officially staccato voice, that "We will not pay you in cash, and any payment we do make will have to be in the United States. Also, you should not go into Afghanistan, as neither the American ambassador in Afghanistan nor in Pakistan will be able to help you."

I asked the good Lt. Col. Nincompoop what the security was like on the road between Peshawar (where the SOF team was based), and Islamabad, where I had flown in. "The road is secure. There are no checkpoints, no roadblocks, no problems." (I later found that English is the second language of Pakistan. Everybody, including Lt. Col. Nincompoop, says "no problem" and "I understand." The translation for these is invariably, "There is a problem, but I don't understand.")

I flew back to Peshawar where the seven-man SOF team was training Afghans and looking for goodies from the agency list. The agency had offered to pay a dollar a round for an additional 10,000 rounds of AK-74 ammo. But days turned into weeks, and we weren't finding zip. A couple of days before it came time to say

bye-bye, however, our luck began to change.

John Donovan, who had been teaching the muj how to fuse and place land mines, and Jim Pate, our ordnance expert, were able to buy 5,000 rounds of AK-74 ammo for 70 cents a round in Datta. They successfully smuggled the ammo past Pakistani army checkpoints into our hotel in Peshawar, then took off for the States.

Dr. John Peters and I returned after being temporarily "detained" for trying to get into an off-limits refugee camp to find the 5,000 rounds packed into knapsacks, lying on the bed.

Peters and I were scheduled to leave soon, so instead of driving the three-and-a-half hours back to Islamabad, we decided to unload our goodies on the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar, even though we had been instructed otherwise. I mean, we were supposed to be on the same side, right?

I called the consulate, where we had earlier been given the standard dog and pony show briefing, and said we had some items to deliver. No problem. Now it was James Bond time. Taxes were switched, and we constantly checked for a tail.

Our anxiety roller-coastered, as the driver "I understand" and "no problem" us past every army post and police station in Peshawar on our way there. I had no idea how many years in a Pakistani slammer carrying 5,000 rounds would merit, and did not particularly wish to find out.

After finally getting the rounds to the consulate, we breathed a sigh of relief and returned to the hotel. Mission accomplished — or so we thought. At 0730 the next morning, the phone rang.

"Mr. Brown?"  
"Yes."

"This is the consulate. I have been informed by my superiors in Islamabad that we cannot accept the goods you delivered. You will have to come and pick them up."

I was very tempted to tell him to take the 5,000 rounds and insert them into the body orifice of his choice, but if he did that, we'd be kissing off \$3,500. Ah, what the hell! I thought, let's take it to the U.S. Embassy.

So we hired some Abdul with an old Mercedes and headed out. The anxiety level started creeping up again as our driver 1) had to check his oil, 2) get something to eat, 3) get gas, and 4) find something to drink. On top of this, we had been informed that all taxi drivers were Pakistani police informants. So what do I do if our friend Abdul 5) "has to make a phone call?" Cold cock him or just go quietly to jail?

No phone call was made, however, and we were soon on the road to Islamabad. I relaxed back into the cracked leather seat, until...

"Driver, what's that up ahead there about 200 meters?" I queried.

"Ah, sahib, nothing to worry about, is only army roadblock checking for guns and drugs to Islamabad."

I came out of my seat like a shot. Guns and drugs to Islamabad my ass! It's Brown and Peters to the slammer, and Lt. Col. Nincompoop had said "No problems." I was going to strangle the little son-of-a-bitch when I got to the embassy. I was getting ideas...boiling oil, the rack, bamboo splinters, disembowelment...maybe even make him listen to SOF Technical Editor Kokals evaluate the merits of the Thompson and the Sten for a whole day. Ouch!

Over the next three hours, there were five, maybe six more checkpoints like the first, "Abdul, what is..." I would ask, only to hear, "Oh, no problem, is only being checkpoint for..." My anxiety level was now on white-hot rage. I wouldn't have the patience to torture poor Lt. Col. Nincompoop. I was going to fire 5,000 rounds of 5.45 up his ass in one big glorious burst.

The last roadblock came into view. "And THIS one, driver?" I asked, smoke waiting slowly from my ears. "Ah, to check driver's papers and license. I have neither. No problem." Ah, well, maybe we can con the authorities to send Abdul to jail with us, too. That would be some consolation, anyway.

Strangely, we made it through all the checkpoints. How? I don't know. Maybe Allah does: Maybe the guards just thought gringos in a Mercedes shouldn't be screwed with. At any rate, after getting lost on his way, Abdul finally pulled up at the embassy.

Fortunately, the good Lt. Col. Nincompoop was not there. So the delicately colored Persian rugs would not have to be cleaned of blood stains, and I would not end up in jail, after all.

Colonel Harold Mauger, Defense and Air Attaché, greeted us, calmed me down, had the ammo counted, gave me a receipt and promised a letter of appreciation (see page 76). Doc Peters just looked on and smiled. He hadn't cracked a single expletive during the entire trip over. A cooler dude than he I know not. Maybe he had taken some weird Pakistani pills.

So the mission was accomplished. The ammo was delivered and SOF was \$1,500 richer. Was it worth it? Not in your wildest dreams, sahib!

—R.K. Brown

gun (see "Guns Behind the Great Wall Part 2," October '87), and the 7.62x25mm subsonic cartridge (see "Guns Behind the Great Wall Part 3," November '87).

During interludes between our frenzied test schedule, Bob Brown jogged on the Great Wall and I presented my seminar. At one point in my presentation I criticized the practice of chrome-plating bayonet blades

as an undesirable increase in position disclosure. One of the institute's engineers huffily replied that this was done to instill fear in the enemy. Waiting until the end of my presentation to respond, I offered a toast expressing my desire that all of our common enemies be equipped with shining bayonets. In light of the subsequent massacre in Tiananmen Square, I can only hope

that the PRC continues to equip its troops with chrome-plated bayonets.

After our trip to mainland China, officials of Poly Technologies, Inc. proposed that SOF lead tour groups to the PRC to fire weapons ranging from the Kalashnikov to 14.5mm HMGs and RPG-7s at a range

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